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Scenes of the VNPA Combatants' Life

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THE FOUNDING, DEVELOPMENT AND PRESENT TASKS OF THE VIET NAM PEOPLE'S ARMY

- Interview granted by General VO NGUYEN GIAP to the review
Militarwesen of the German Democratic Republic -

QUESTION 1:

WHAT was the national and international context of the founding of the Viet Nam People's Army?

ANSWER:

THE Viet Nam people's armed forces came into being as the result of the firm, sound and creative leadership of the Viet Nam Workers' Party headed by President Ho Chi Minh. It was linked with the successful development of the Vietnamese Revolution in the context of the increasing development of the world revolutionary movement.

Our nation, endowed with a long and glorious history, has acquired in the course of its thousands of years of construction and combat, traditions of unyielding resistance to foreign aggressors of all denominations. More recently, during the past eighty years of the French imperialists' domination, the Vietnamese people, undaunted by terror and repression of utmost barbarity, rose up incessantly against the aggressors and their lackeys.

Since the beginning of the 20th century, especially since the victory of the Great October Revolution in

Russia which ushered in a new era in mankind's history, the Vietnamese Revolution has witnessed new developments. It was Comrade Ho Chi Minh himself, our leader of genius, the great patriot of the Vietnamese nation, who blazed the trail for our entire country with the light of Marxism-Leninism and founded our Party, thereby most decisively making possible all subsequent successes of the Vietnamese Revolution.

As early as 1930, the very year of its birth, our Party already laid down the judicious line for the Vietnamese Revolution: to carry out national democratic revolution and then socialist revolution, by-passing the stage of capitalist development. Having grasped the Marxist-Leninist theory of violent revolution, it pointed out the only correct revolutionary method to remove the yoke of the imperialists and the feudalists in their pay, as well as the necessity of opposing revolutionary violence to counter-revolutionary violence and wrest back power, implementing these lines and directives, our Party took, right in its early days, important decisions concerning the founding of "worker-peasant self-defence groups", the "worker-peasant army", then the "Red Army of the worker-peasant self-defence groups".

In the revolutionary tide sweep-

ing the whole country in the years 1930-1931 climaxing in the establishment of the Nghe-Tinh Soviet (Nghe An and Ha Tinh provinces - E.d.), self-defence groups of workers and peasants were set up with the participation of elite elements full of revolutionary zeal and bravery, chosen from among members of the workers' and peasants' association and the Young Communists' League, etc. These red self-defence formations were just the first seeds of the revolutionary armed forces of our people.

During the years of the Second World War, whilst the Soviet people and the other peoples in the world united to resist the German, Italian and Japanese fascists, a powerful revolutionary drive was launched in our country to overthrow the French colonialists and drive out the Japanese fascists. In face of the rapid evolution of the international and internal situation, in order to put into effect the Party's revolutionary line, preparations for an armed insurrection became a pressing task. Our Party switched from the political struggle to the armed struggle, from the political mass organisation to the building of semi-armed and armed organisations and the building of revolutionary bases.

Thus, the first revolutionary

armed organisations of the Vietnamese people came into being one after another: the guerrilla detachment of Bac Son (1940), the guerrilla detachment for the Cochinchina Insurrection (1940), units of the National Salvation Army (1941), the propaganda detachment of the Viet Nam Liberation Army (1943), the guerrilla detachment of Ba To (1943), etc. December 22, 1944, date of the founding of the propaganda detachment of the Viet Nam Liberation Army on direct instructions from Comrade Ho Chi Minh, is regarded as the founding day of the Viet Nam People's Army.

In March 1945, the Japanese fascists succeeded through a coup de force in ousting the French colonialists and seizing the whole Indochinese peninsula for themselves. The struggle of our people against Japanese occupation, for national salvation, vigorously developed throughout the country, inflicting heavier and heavier losses on the enemy. From North to South, in the upsurge of the efforts against the Japanese fascists, the people's revolutionary organisations, guerrilla detachments and anti-Japanese bases multiplied quickly. Anti-Japanese guerrilla was active everywhere.

(Continued page 4)

A manoeuvre of the Viet Nam People's Army



25th FOUNDING ANNIVERSARY OF THE VIET NAM PEOPLE'S ARMY

Dec. 22, 1944
Dec. 22, 1969

At the 47th session of the Paris Conference, Ambassador Ha Van Lau on behalf of the DRVN government delegation, severely criticized President Nixon's speech on Dec. 15, 1969. He pointed out that that speech only restated the policy outlined in Mr. Nixon's speech on Nov. 13, 1969, for the imposition of neo-colonialism on South Vietnam through the Vietnamization of the war and negotiation from a "position of strength." Mr. Nixon's speech on Vietnamization of the war which he claimed would bring a just peace in Vietnam is essentially a plan to continue and prolong the war. In his December 15 speech, the US President merely uttered unveiled threats against the Vietnamese people. Mr. Ha Van Lau pointed out that these intimations could never shake the determination of the Vietnamese people who have distinguished themselves in the course of their long history by their successful resistance to various foreign invasions and who have not less successfully fought off US aggression for many years.

47th Plenary Session of Paris Conference on Viet Nam (Dec. 18, 1969)

MR HA VAN LAU SEVERELY SCORES THE NIXON ADMINISTRATION'S WAR-LIKE POLICY

After castigating Mr. Nixon's "three criteria for US withdrawal," the DRVN representative commented on Nixon's decision to pull out another 50,000 US troops by April 15 next year was part of the policy of drop-by-drop troop reduction, prolongation of the occupation of South Vietnam by US troops and possession of the war. He said even if this were carried out, then the rhythm of withdrawal would still remain very slow and by April next year there would remain no less than 134,000 US aggressors to continue wreaking destruction and death every day.

Rejecting Mr. Nixon's claim that a precipitate withdrawal will mean a "defeat and humiliation" for the United States, Mr. Ha Van Lau made it clear that as a matter of fact, the Vietnamese people had no intention to humiliate anybody, but they only wanted to regain peace and independence for their country, to live on friendly terms with the American people and the peoples of other countries in the world. The honour of the United States would be saved by promptly putting an end to the illegal and costly war of aggression in South Vietnam.

The DRVN envoy went on: "As far as the right to self-determination of the South Vietnamese people is concerned, Mr. Nixon still sets his face against the fair and reasonable policy of the NLF and the RVN PRG for the formation of a provisional coalition government which would be based on general elections in South Vietnam. He also goes on urging the maintenance of the Thieu-Ky-Khiem administration, and the South

Vietnamese people's acceptance of the US-installed rotten and fascist administration. As for the US pilots detained in North Viet Nam, in his December 15 speech Mr. Nixon gave a completely false picture of their condition and distorted the humanitarian policy of the DRVN Government. These US pilots had come to bomb North Viet Nam, and had perpetrated countless crimes against the Vietnamese people. They were brought in and are subject to the jurisdiction of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam. Yet, our Government has been applying a humanitarian policy towards them, the wounded and the sick have been given medical care, the others also well treated and allowed to correspond with their families. It is the US authorities who sent the US pilots to commit crimes against the Vietnamese people.

Hanoi Press Opinion

NIXON'S DECEMBER 15 ANNOUNCEMENT

Mr. Nixon once again tried to sell his speech for a "fair" and "just peace," a "settlement through negotiation" and if that fails, "Vietnamization of the war." He also charged the Vietnamese people, with refusing to negotiate seriously, with attempting to impose "defeat and humiliation" on the United States, and "maltreating" the American pilots captured in Viet Nam. It was obviously psychological warfare. He also made known that the US did not name a successor to Cabot Lodge at the head of the US delegation at the Paris Conference on Viet Nam. In fact, it is another move in the US scheme to prolong the war. As made clear by American public opinion, the point is not to pull out 25,000, 35,000 or 50,000 US troops. The point is that there will remain over 400,000 US troops and 60,000 troops of US satellites after the troop cut.

Concerning the "Vietnamization" of the war plan, Nixon claimed that he had got a "much more favourable report" with regard to the training of South Vietnamese forces and that US casualties "continue to be at the lowest rate," thus making it possible to effect another reduction of American combat troops. He threatened that if the South Vietnamese people stepped up their fight for self-determination, the US "shall not hesitate to take strong and effective measures." On the other hand, Nixon promised that the US would be "flexible and forthcoming" if the Vietnamese people were willing to "talk seriously" — which means in effect to accept US absurd terms.

Mr. Nixon's December 15 address was just the playing back of an old record. It gave no indication that the US would stop its elaborate prosecution of the war and give up its neo-colonialist policy. However, the speech did draw attention to two points.

Firstly, the US President invoked Robert Thompson's

book to prove that his "Vietnamization" of the war plan was a "success."

Thompson is a British officer who helped the US set up "strategic hamlets" in South Viet Nam and who later packed up after the US "special war" had failed. Thompson is now hired by Nixon to peddle his "Vietnamization."

Secondly, Nixon announced the reduction of 50,000 more US troops by April 15, 1970, describing it as "another orderly step in our plan for peace."

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Meanwhile, the war continues. In comparison to the total of US expeditionary forces existing in South Viet Nam or to remain in South Viet Nam, the US troops already withdrawn or to be withdrawn only represent a small portion. When asked by a journalist on June 19, 1969, to comment on ex-Defence Secretary C. Clifford's view that 100,000 US troops should be pulled out this year, Nixon stated that he would "beat Clifford's time-table." The fact is that in 1969, the US only pulls out 50,000 troops.

Public opinion in the United States has complained that troop cuts of the Nixonian type are "too slow and too small" (UPI, Dec. 16). The AFP Saigon correspondent reported that many GIs "ironically" commented on Nixon's address, and

threw the President's words to the wind.

US Crimes in North Viet Nam in November

At 4 p.m., eight AO-6A dropped demolition bombs and 1500 incendiary bombs on Huoi Phong, Huoi Lao, Cheng and Ai Khe, causing 4 casualties among the inhabitants and burning the dwellings and belongings. Huoi Phong was virtually gutted by fire.

In the Truoc province: On Nov. 28, at 2 p.m., US aircraft strafed Huong Son district. In Quang Binh province: On Nov. 11, at 4.30 a.m., two F-4s and one F-105 mounted six raids on Minh Hoa district, releasing 46 explosive bombs of various sizes and 7,800 pellet bombs. 12 people were wounded. On

Nov. 11 and 15, twelve B-52s carried out carpet bombing, pouring 350 tons of explosives in the same district; 21 casualties were recorded and burning the houses and property burnt.

In Vinh Linh area: On Nov. 10, at 2 p.m., 4 p.m. and 12 p.m., US aircraft strafed Minh Phuoc cooperative (Vinh Son village) with 127 mm and 160 mm guns, damaging some dwellings. On Nov. 13, at 10 p.m., US aircraft strafed Huong Lap village, pouring on the tons of explosives. On Nov. 14, 16, 17, 18, 21,

quoted an American Army sergeant as saying, "Nixon's just throwing people a bone for Christmas."

It is clear that Nixon's decision to withdraw some more troops is only political sop for home consumption, not an effort to end the war. We denounce to world public opinion the US scheme to prolong the war and the barbarous crimes committed by the US, puppet and satellite troops against the South Vietnamese people, typical of which are the bloodbaths in Son My, Huoi Lao, An, Kong H'ing and many other places. We protest against the obdurate attitude of the US government at the Paris Conference.

The Vietnamese people's position expounded in the four points of the DRVN Government and the ten-point overall solution of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam, is a principled and just one which enjoys broad sympathy and support in the world.

At the combat position of Company 4, often at moon time under the blazing sun, Big Long is seen reviving his gun and taking a sight in the direction of the enemy. It is first for 5 or 10 seconds, and later for a 3 or 4 minutes. Meanwhile, at busy taking, "Little Long" is buying

the day he has been joined up, Nguyen Thi Mun, a political instructor of the militia platoon of Tu My hamlet, Truong Xung village, Quang Binh province, has been over head and ears in public work; yet she has managed to get a grade work-plan in agricultural production and her family has had surplus paddy to sell to the state.

The Tu My inhabitants never forget the day when her unit was bringing enemy's bombs and shells to salvage the people's property. "Petit but plucky" said old Duang of her when Mun, at the head of her unit, had captured an American major pilot. It was a pitch dark night. His plane was on a hillside, and she was shot down by her own defence force. She was a flaming torch plummeting to earth. Immediately the gun orders to her unit to rush in several columns in the direction of the downing plane, while she herself, a rifle firm in her hand, held a small group across the field despite the rain downpour. She was the first to reach the bright light of enemy flames overhead. "That's good. We can better see where the air

plane is. Hurry up, instant!" no sooner had she said than a lighted signal was sent up by the enemy, revealing the pilot's hiding place. Mun shot. In fact, Mun saw him behind an elevated ricefield dyke. She fired up a shot and cried, "Hands up!" when her rifle's night sighter lit the pirate and collected his paraphernalia.

In early spring 1968, when the general offensives and concerted uprisings took place in the South, Mun was entrusted by the Party Local committee with the task of commanding a militia company which had many engagements with enemy planes but could shoot down none. Her unit was charged by other units had grounded American aircraft. "To down an airplane requires not only courage but intelligence, technique and a good command," Mun said to herself. She was determined to study appropriate ways of firing at higher bombers and downing them.

One afternoon, taking advantage of a cloudy sky, from the two First Flight in the leading one fired some rockets which exploded a dozen metres above the enemy's head. A lot of dust and smoke. Mun

25th FOUNDING ANNIVERSARY OF THE VIET NAM PEOPLE'S ARMY

SCENES OF THE VNPA COMBATANTS

The Race Is On

THE 3,300th US plane has been brought down over North Viet Nam, but the race is on between gunner No 1 Le Van Long with flying colours throughout from a very great distance and sent back accurate reports to the command. While observing enemy planes on a dive-bombing run, he is not only able to report accurately on the distance, speed, etc., but with calm he can also foresee where the enemy's bombs will land. Company leader Nguyen Viet Nam regards as completely reliable the observation results given by "Little Long". In one battle, "Little Long" was sure that a CBU was about to hit the gun site. Ram accurately took necessary and timely safety precautions and nobody was wounded.

Fighters of the Song Gianh detachment have learnt a lot from this contest of battle skill. Everybody still remembers that on August 7, 1965, gunner No 1 "Big Long" used his body to cover the loading device during an action. A little more than a month later, he again protected his wounded comrade Ho Si Duong with his body. He likes to offer to share with civilians his foxhole when there is an alert. He likes to offer to move all the 50 munition cases off the water-logged area, and he likes to have a good sleep.

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Versed in Capturing US Pilot, Expert at Grounding US Plane

SINCE the day he has been joined up, Nguyen Thi Mun, a political instructor of the militia platoon of Tu My hamlet, Truong Xung village, Quang Binh province, has been over head and ears in public work; yet she has managed to get a grade work-plan in agricultural production and her family has had surplus paddy to sell to the state.

The Tu My inhabitants never forget the day when her unit was bringing enemy's bombs and shells to salvage the people's property. "Petit but plucky" said old Duang of her when Mun, at the head of her unit, had captured an American major pilot. It was a pitch dark night. His plane was on a hillside, and she was shot down by her own defence force. She was a flaming torch plummeting to earth. Immediately the gun orders to her unit to rush in several columns in the direction of the downing plane, while she herself, a rifle firm in her hand, held a small group across the field despite the rain downpour. She was the first to reach the bright light of enemy flames overhead. "That's good. We can better see where the air

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Now, the story about "Big Long" — "Little Long" has become an interesting topic for officers and men of the Song Gianh Artillery to study. What prompted "Big Long" to accomplish his job as gunner No 1 with flying colours throughout this one-thousand-day period? Why has "Little Long" been able to spot the enemy planes (often with only his naked eye) so quickly and so accurately when they still look like tiny pinheads? All that secret should be found out.

The battle of September 8, 1967 was a case in point. Once again spotter Nguyen Xuan Long succeeded in locating a F-4C. Within seconds all gun barrels of the unit were trained in the direction of the incoming planes. "Little Long" kept a keen eye on the moving targets. He let them in closer and closer, 15 km, to 5 km and finally within firing range. The go-signal given, the whole unit opened up. The lead plane was hit down on the spot in the very rounds of ack-ack fire and its pilot was captured. "Little Long" was again rated first among the family of spotters for this remarkable feat. The race is on between "Big Long" and "Little Long" who are honing their skills through training, maintaining high vigilance and standing ready at all times to wipe out the US aggressors wherever the Fatherland wants them to.

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Cultural and Artistic Activities at Anti-Aircraft Automatic Gun Company 5

COMPANY 5 is as good in combat as it is in cultural and artistic activities. When preparing for an operation, the company not only painstakingly sees to its weaponry and food supplies, but also carefully plans its cultural and artistic activities in the field. In the men's packs there are always bamboo flutes, and makeshift mandolins, and books. Everything kept in good shape. It seems these things lighten the knapsacks. Merry songs help quicken the pace. The nighttime men going up the line. Even under rains of bombs and shells, the company's mood remains gay and cheerful.

Once a platoon set down an enemy plane in the very first rounds of automatic weapons fire. The Truong, Cong Chinh, Lin Thi Sy and others, immediately tore a bit of paper of ammunition cases and sat writing a flash report on their knees, their backs leaning against the gun tripod, for the front's news bulletin. Between two battles, the men used to gather around the gun tripod to hear An Van Tan recite poems composed on the spot to extol the successes of the winners.

Hardly had the unit ended a daring engagement when Tien Duc wrote a short play

entitled "Hillside Position" in praise of the seek-and-destroy spirit.

Cultural and artistic activities have become one of the criteria they strive to achieve in the company evaluation drive. Anti-aircraft platoons has its own wall-paper which can be rolled up and moved from place to place. Activities from 3-man teams, squads and platoons have been gathered to form the company's cultural and artistic groups. In this way, after each action, the company has been able to offer a substantial program of entertainments. The unit has also regular monthly reviews, dealing with combat experience and introducing its exemplary men and deeds.

The booklet "For Peace and Independence" and stories about model fighters and deeds have been read and re-read and discussions held in every outfit. Good examples are commended in time and multiplied incessantly.

Every gun outfit has its own portable book-case with 5 or 6 books which are passed from hand to hand in the combat position.

Songs have never ceased resounding at Company 5's position, playing a share in the unit's successes.



"The people are to the army what water is to the fish" goes a saying.

THE OLD MAN OF THE GUN EMPLOYMENT

It was late in the night. Old Charles, a veteran, turned from the gun emplacement. The sounds of moving caterpillars, the noise of a tank, and more audible in the distance of the village. Knowing that the army was coming,

he rushed out, with a hurried can-lamp. No sooner had he reached the highway than the conveyer of gun-hauling tractor rattled to a stop. The company leader (Continued page 7)



President HO CHI MINH and General VO NGUYEN GIAP (in the First Resistance War)

(Continued from page 1)

Partial insurrections broke out, liberated areas were created and preparations for the General Insurrection were made in the greatest urgency.

In August 1945, an international event of paramount importance proved very propitious to the Vietnamese Revolution: after defeating the German fascists, the Soviet Red Army dealt a mortal blow at the Japanese fascists by wiping out their Kwantung Army, and crushed Japanese fascism, the chief enemy of the Vietnamese people at the time. At this great juncture, a national conference of the Party, convened by its Central Committee, decided to launch the General Insurrection to seize power throughout the country. The revolutionary storm was let loose. Within a very short time, the August General Insurrection was successful. Popular revolutionary power was established throughout the country and the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam was proclaimed.

The days of the General Insurrection were also days of quick development, beyond all expectation, of the semi-army and armed revolutionary forces. Following the triumph of the August Revolution, these became the Army of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam: the Viet Nam People's Army.

I have just outlined the process and the conditions of the founding and development of the Viet Nam people's armed forces. This process is characterized by the following features:

First, the Viet Nam people's armed forces stem from the political and military line of the Viet Nam Workers' Party. Our Party headed by Comrade Ho Chi Minh is the organizer and commander of our people's armed forces. We owe them to our Party and President Ho. The leadership of the Party has been the banner guaranteeing victory for the Viet Nam people's armed forces.

Second, the Viet Nam people's armed forces grew up in the process of the revolutionary movement, in the struggle of the entire Vietnamese people for self-liberation and in the flames of the revolutionary war. It is truly an army born of the people and fighting for the people.

Third, on the international plane, the birth and growth of the Viet Nam people's armed forces, as the development of the Vietnamese revolution in general, are closely linked with the invincible force of Marxism-Leninism, with the great successes of the Soviet Red Army during the Second World

War, with the development and achievements of the socialist camp and of the world revolutionary movement in our era.

QUESTION 2:

COMRADE Minister, what have been in your opinion the most essential stages of the development of the Viet Nam People's Army during the past 25 years under the Party's leadership?

ANSWER:

FIRST of all I would like to underscore this point: the history of the Viet Nam people's armed forces is ultimately associated with the development of the Vietnamese Revolution. The building and development of our armed forces, as already said above, dates back to the birth of our Party, to the creation of self-defence formations and the first guerrilla detachments.

The period from their founding to the August Revolution of 1945 was that of the setting up of the people's armed forces on a national scale. It was also that of development by leaps and bounds of the Vietnamese Revolution and the Viet Nam people's armed forces. Together with the entire people, the people's armed forces victoriously carried out the General Insurrection, shattered the Japanese fascist yoke and installed the people's power.

In fact, in the mounting anti-Japanese action for national salvation, and particularly in the glorious days of the General Insurrection, the people's armed forces grew up considerably and became the Viet Nam People's Army immediately after the founding of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam. Thus, the prophetic prediction of Comrade Ho Chi Minh in his instructions concerning the creation of the propaganda squad of the Viet Nam Liberation Army came true: "In spite of its modest beginnings, it will have a very glorious future. It is the embryo of the Liberation Army; it will operate through the length of our country, from South to North."

The period from the August Revolution of 1945 to mid-1954 was that of training and rapid growth of the Viet Nam people's armed forces: it was

also the period during which, together with the entire people, they victoriously carried out the great war of resistance against the French imperialists and US interventionists.

Shortly after the August Revolution and the emergence of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, the French colonialists unleashed a new war of aggression on our territory.

In such a situation, responding to the appeal of the Party and the revolutionary program headed by President Ho Chi Minh, resolved to "make every sacrifice rather than fight and ruled by foreigners and live in slavery," the armed forces and entire people of Viet Nam waged a protracted people's war of resistance on all fronts from the firm resolve to wipe out the aggressors.

During the nine years of our Resistance, confronted with an enemy having a military and economic potential many times bigger, the Viet Nam people's armed forces, side by side with the entire people, displayed an unending will to rely on their own efforts to defy innumerable privations and hardships, to fight courageously and stubbornly and wipe out the greatest number of enemy troops possible while preserving and building up their own potential. From disparate units, exclusively infantry, equipped with rudimentary weapons, they gradually grew into the crucible of war, into more and more important main force units before becoming big units composed of different services. Starting essentially as guerrilla warfare, they later became able to conduct offensive campaigns of ever bigger scale, and accomplished their tasks, worthy of being the hard core of the people's war of resistance. The most characteristic event in this period was the great Dien Bien Phu victory for which they shared the credit with the rest of the people, making a decisive contribution to the success of the Geneva Conference, the restoration of peace in Indo-China and the complete liberation of North Viet Nam.

From 1954 to 1964, it was the period of the building of the army of the socialist State in the conditions of restored peace in the North, with a view to defending the socialist North, contributing to its building in order to make it a steady revolutionary base for the whole country.

After the conclusion of the Geneva Agreements Viet Nam has been temporarily divided into two zones. The Vietnamese Revolution entered a new stage, that of consolidation of peace, of struggle for the reunification of the country and for the building of socialism in North Viet Nam.

Confronted with the above-mentioned tasks, our people's armed forces have not ceased developing for qualities inherent in their nature and fine traditions, stepping up the training of troops in order to become a revolutionary, regular and modern army; at the same time, they have been striving to increase their vigilance and stand ready at all time to fight the enemy. Side by side with the rest of the people, they have toiled all hellish manoeuvres and war provocations of the enemy, accomplishing with merits all the tasks entrusted to them by the people.

From the end of 1964 and early 1965, the increase of the scale of aggression in South Viet Nam, the US imperialists threw their air and naval forces into

brazen attacks against the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, an independent and sovereign State, member of the socialist camp. The North was thus forced to face up to an extremely savage war of destruction launched by the US imperialists. During that period, our armed forces, side by side with the entire people, won a very important victory in the fight against US aggression, for national salvation by completely defeating the war of destruction by the US imperialists.

Holding high the banner of the Party and President Ho Chi Minh, the banner of "determination to defend the US aggressors," the armed forces and people of North Viet Nam imaginatively applied the line of the people's war and conducted a people's war of a particular type, fighting against the aggressors chiefly against their air force, together with the

and self-defence forces throughout the country; they have acquired considerable combat experience and ever higher combat efficiency.

This should be underlined: never since the signing of the 1954 Geneva Agreements have the guns of the imperialist aggressors been completely silent in our national territory taken as a whole. Treaching in the footsteps of the French imperialists, the US imperialists have launched a very atrocious war of aggression with a view to turning South Viet Nam into a neo-colony and a military base of the US; as a result, as the Southern Great Frontiers war 14 million dear fellow-countrymen, continuing the traditions of the first sacred war of resistance against the French imperialists, have been upholding the indomitable spirit of the nation and relentlessly waging the second war

and difficulties, devised effective tactical methods and achieved very high combat efficiency. At present, they are defeating the US imperialists and their lackeys' 1.5 million-strong army armed with up-to-date equipment and composed of the best trained American divisions.

The heroic People's Liberation Armed Forces of South Viet Nam, a credit to the armed forces and people of the entire Vietnamese nation, have been their valuable bit in the resistance against the US aggression, steadily taking it to total victory.

During the past 25 years the Vietnamese nation has written the most magnificent pages of its history. In part, inspired with a single purpose, it has been, together with its armed forces, credited with extraordinary feats and has got the better one after another of three big imperialisms: Japanese fascism, French imperialism and US imperialism. Once again I wish to emphasize that our people's armed forces owe their great accomplishments to the sound and inventive leadership of the Viet Nam Workers' Party, to the immense love and care afforded them by our people, to the generous aid pervaded with proletarian internationalism of the countries in the socialist camp. I would like therefore to take this opportunity to convey our most heartfelt thanks to the Party, people and armies of the fraternal socialist countries for their inestimable aid.

QUESTION 3:

COMRADE Minister, what are to your mind the most important factors determining the high combat power of the Viet Nam People's Army and its successes in the fight against the US aggressors?

ANSWER:

THE overriding factor of all the great successes of our people and the Viet Nam People's Army is the creative revolutionary line and military line of the Viet Nam Workers' Party and the sagacious leadership of the Party headed by President Ho Chi Minh.

The Party has been the founder, organizer, educator and leader of the Viet Nam people's armed forces from their creation to the present stage of development. It has creatively squared the fundamental tenets of Marxism-Leninism regarding war and the army with the realities of the Vietnamese Revolution and put into practice Frederick Engels' views on the people's war and Lenin's theses on the "new army," an army composed of "politically awakened peasants and workers."

It has enhanced to a high level the traditions of stubborn and unflinching struggle, of bravery and heroism and the valuable experiences of the Vietnamese nation in its resist-

ance to foreign aggressors all along its centuries-old history. At the same time, the Party has ascertained in its original way the precious lessons acquired by the fraternal countries in their armed struggle and in the building of their revolutionary armed forces.

The Party has created an army absolutely loyal to the Fatherland, the people, the socialist and communist ideal, animated by an ardent patriotism, a genuine spirit of proletarian internationalism, always ready to fight unyieldingly and possessors of splendid combat qualities. The Viet Nam people's armed forces have proved worthy of the commendations of the Party and President Ho Chi Minh: "Loyal to the Party, dedicated to the people, capable of fulfilling any tasks assigned, of overcoming any difficulties and defeating any enemy." They represent a concrete-materialization of the Vietnamese revolutionary epoch of victory of the valiant Vietnamese people over the US imperialist aggression.

The Party leadership over the armed forces is an unqualified, direct and comprehensive one, in the political, ideological and organizational fields as well as in the accomplishment of all the tasks of building, fighting and work.

In the building of the armed forces, our Party has always attached great importance to the building up of the efficiency of the revolutionary army, combat morale, political consciousness, the general standard of the command, tactical and technical capacity of the men and officers, the material and technical foundations of the army, etc. We also see to it that the improvement of the equipment and the training of the troops, thereby providing an ever better material base for the fighting efficiency of the army. However, the first preoccupation of our Party still remains the forging of the man-educate and train the fighter cadre, Party member and member of the youth organization in the army, into a combatant with an ever higher revolutionary conscience, with a passionate love for the Fatherland and socialism, with a will to stubbornly to make of him a valiant and clever fighter who is proficient in the use of, and can make the most of, all weapons in his possession to outwit the enemy. Such a task is the application of Lenin's teaching in "Whatever war, in the final analysis what decides victory is the morale of the masses who shed their blood on the battlefield." Consequently we have given pride of place to political work in the army.

After settling satisfactorily the relationship between war and armaments, as said above, taking care to instill a great determination to fight into the armed forces, we have also solved the question of the quality of strategy and tactics which provide the army with tactical forms and methods really efficacious and most suitable to the concrete situation on the operational theatre in Viet Nam. These are combat methods as daring as original which will further enrich the military art of Marxism-Leninism.

It is precisely thanks to such a line that in the conditions of Viet Nam, a country which has neither huge territory nor vast natural resources, large population, our people and our armed forces have been able to pro-

vide to the maximum the arm will to fight and win, to fight with bravery and intelligence, to put the spirit of the offensive in the attacks against the enemy, to successfully get an army with limited troop strength against an aggressor superior numerically and equipped with more modern weapons, against the army of the USA, the chief of all imperialisms whose economic and military potential is the biggest in the capitalist world.

QUESTION 4:

WHAT objectives has the Viet Nam People's Army set for itself in the 25th year of its existence to continue strengthening the defence potential of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam?

ANSWER:

THE Yankee imperialists are heading for an evident failure and doubtless for total defeat. However, they remain very stubborn. The Nixon administration is pursuing the war of aggression and nurturing the illusion of extricating itself from the critical situation through the "de-Americanization" and progressive "Vietnamization" of the war, trying to impose neo-colonialism on South Viet Nam and perpetuate the division of our country. On the other hand, in spite of the bitter setbacks in their intervention, the US imperialists continue aggression, violating the sovereignty, and threatening the security of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and piling up crimes against our people. At the same time, they are stepping up their intervention and aggression against Laos and Cambodia.

Viet Nam is one country, the Vietnamese people are one nation. So long as South Viet Nam, the other half of our country so dear to us, remains under the yoke of the US imperialist aggressors, North Viet Nam cannot enjoy a genuine peace. In consequence, the most sacred task of our entire people at present is to keep up our stubborn fight until we defeat completely the US imperialist aggressors, liberate the South, defend the North and ultimately achieve the reunification of the country.

Together with our people throughout the country, our people's armed forces must translate into deeds President Ho Chi Minh's instructions: "So long as a single aggressor remains in the territory, we must fight on and sweep him away."

While the North of our country is doing its best to fulfil its duty as the Great Rear toward the Great Frontline of the South, the Viet Nam people's armed forces never forget their heavy responsibilities in the defence of the socialist North, revolutionary base of the entire country. They are set to increase their combat power in all

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December 22, 1944: General VO NGUYEN GIAP reading the Soldiers' Oath on the day of the formation of the first unit of the Viet Nam People's Army.

entire people, with the anti-aircraft forces of the regular army, the regional forces and the people's militia formations as the core. Making use of all kinds of arms at their disposal, rifle, machinegun, anti-aircraft gun of all calibres, surface-to-air missiles, jet fighter aircraft, etc. our people's armed forces won a powerful fire network over the whole country; they eventually exploded the mythical "supremacy" of US air power, dealt a blow at both the modern Air Force and Navy of the US hard and deserving blows. Thanks to the lucid and inventive leadership of the Party, the great vitality of the socialist regime, a great revolutionary heroism and the precious and important aid of the fraternal socialist countries, never before had the national defence forces of our people developed to such a high level on all fronts and grown so quickly as in the years of resistance against the US imperialists. At present, the people's armed forces in Viet Nam consist of solid main force units with different services provided with modern equipment; they have been trained in regional troops and people's militia

of resistance, this time against the imperialists and their henchmen.

Under the able leadership of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation and, since recently, also of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam, the armed forces and people of the heroic South have recorded a series of splendid successes in the last few years. In particular, since the beginning of 1968, they have mounted several general attacks and scored brilliant unprecedented achievements on all fronts: military, political and diplomatic. These have been considerable military exploits of a people's war brought to a very high level.

Grown in the immense revolutionary struggle, steeped in the spirit of the crucible of the war of liberation, the South Viet Nam People's Liberation Armed Forces, the brother of the Viet Nam People's Army, have brought into ever fuller play the splendid traditions of their heroism and the valuable experiences of the Vietnamese nation in its resist-

Revolutionary Rule Keeps On Consolidating and Developing

At present, four-fifths of South Viet Nam with 11 million people amounting to a total of 14 million are under the revolutionary rule which has established itself in 41 provinces and towns, over 150 districts and 1,300 villages among South Viet Nam's 1600 big cities like Saigon, Hue, Da Nang, Ca Mau. The already have their people's revolutionary administration and popular power is spreading to disputed areas or in areas controlled by the enemy. In some committees the proportion of woman members reaches up to 40 or even 50 per cent.

This extension of revolutionary power has thrown panic among the US-puppets who vainly seek to destroy or threaten this power which belongs to the people, comes from them and works for them. Under its guidance the people are fighting, intensifying production, building and developing their revolutionary forces and improving their living conditions.

In particular, revolutionary power guarantees to the peasantry the ownership of their land. Up to now, about 2 million hectares of South Viet Nam's tillable land out of nearly 4.5 million have been definitively or temporarily distributed.

Irrigation work of digging canals, building of dams, have been developed, under no motto "No waste land, no laffs, no peasant", the

peasantry eagerly tackles with farming and in several provinces, particularly in the Mekong Delta, it has obtained a better yield: 3 to 4 tons of paddy per hectare for one crop, and even 6 to 10 tons in some places.

Animal husbandry, handicraft, by-trades, the manufacture and repair of agricultural implements have blossomed. Several villages in Central Trung Bo have reached the target set for stockbreeding (2 pigs and 4 fowls per family). In some provinces of the Mekong Delta such families own one pig and 40 fowls in an average. In others, there are up to 10,000 fowls per family.

The revolutionary power has also granted credit to the peasants, supplied them with production means and provided help to the victims of natural calamities and war. With regard to the ethnic minorities it has adequately catered for their needs in salt and staple consumer goods.

A kind of "communal charter" has been established in the villages of the liberated zone, setting the citizens' obligations and duties in the management of public affairs.

The preservation and amelioration of the public health enjoys constant care from revolutionary power. Today the liberated zone is endowed

with a sanitary network which extends from the centre down to the hamlets, with an increasing staff of medical workers who are at the same time fighters against the US aggressors and puppets, and with laboratories capable of making out of local material Eastern specialties such as Vitamins B1, C and B12, Filatov, serum, neovitamin, antibiotics, antibiotics. Particular importance has been attached to prophylaxis.

Education has made headway. Despite countless difficulties the people's power has set up a comprehensive system of classes from literacy up to secondary ones with a unified syllabus. Regular education for children goes along with popular education for grown ups. The teaching personnel increases with every passing day. More than 90 per cent of school-age children go to school. Every year from 80 to 90 per cent and sometimes all children are admitted to higher classes or successfully pass their year-end exams. Numerous are those who have become "gallant fighters" against US aggression or puppet domination while studying. 17 national minorities now have their own schools. Education in the liberated areas has also actively contributed to check

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MILITARY OPERATIONS

FIRST TEN DAYS OF DECEMBER

THE PLAF RUSHED MANY POSITIONS INSIDE THE ENEMY DEFENCE PERIMETER AND FOUGHT OFF MANY ENEMY SWEEPS

ENEMY DEFENCE AT-TACKED EVERYWHERE

The highlights of PLAF actions were the attacks on the enemy in the Mekong Delta, Southwest of Saigon, where from Dec. 1 to 10, eight provincial capitals including My Tho, Can Tho and Ben Tre, as well as many other smaller urban centres, came under fire.

In My Tho, Ben Tre and Kien Tuong provinces, apart from the assaults on the night from December 3 already mentioned in our previous issue, Gai Phong Press Agency has reported further onsets on December 10 which brought the enemy losses in these provinces to ten companies wiped out or decimated, a police CP destroyed, 200 members of the "pacification" teams and 100 puppet militiamen and 15 cannons, mortars and machine guns put out of action and 3 helicopters shot down.

In three other Mekong Delta provinces, Rach Gia, Ca Mau and An Giang, from December 7 to 9, 3 puppet companies including one of the Marines were knocked out or depleted, 150 puppet troops disabled, two war vessels sunk.

On the Northwestern front of Saigon, in Tay Ninh province, 500 enemy casualties were reported and 15 helicopters shot down between November 30 to December 4. An artillery unit composed of young women twice pounded at a base-camp of the 2nd Brigade of the Tropic Lightning Division, causing a total of 134 GIs, blasting out of commission 11 helicopters and 6 military vehicles and blotting out an arms depot.

Further to the East, near Ba Dong, 130 adverse men were put out of action and 4 aircraft including 1 jet shot down on December 3 during two battles.

Closer to Saigon, at 32 km West-southwest of the city, the Duc Hoa camp of the "Special Forces" were heavily shelled on December 7 and 8, and 3 regiments were wrecked. In Saigon itself, the guerrillas on Dec. 8 struck at the police station of the 6th district and a bridge on the city outskirts in the district of Ca Chi (32 km Northwest of Saigon)

famous for the exploits of its guerrillas, the latter put out of action 50 enemy soldiers and 8 military vehicles between Dec. 2 and 7.

At 153 km East of Saigon, the CP of the Phan Thiet military sector, the rear-base of the 44th puppet Regiment, a battalion and a contingent of the US armed forces near the town were raided from Dec. 2 to 4. The PLAF inflicted 240 casualties, destroyed 17 vehicles and 5 cannons. A hundred kilometres to the Northwest, on December 3 the patriots wrote off the materiel of a company of puppet militia.

Further to the North, a company of the 47th puppet Regiment and 3 militia squads took heavy losses 30 km Southeast of Da Nang, while in the area close to the 17th parallel, in the first ten days of December the enemy lost and destroyed 2 helicopters downed and 17 vehicles destroyed.

ENEMY SWEEPS HEATEN OFF

In the Mekong Delta, on December 1, air waves of enemy attacks were repelled at a place 170 km Southwest of Saigon in the province of An Giang. A hundred puppet troops were killed or wounded during these actions. On Dec. 10, near Tuyen Binh, 93 km West-northwest of Saigon, an enemy patrol was engaged in heavy fighting, losing a company of "Rangers" and a squad of puppet scouts.

In Ben Tre province, on December 3, the PLAF assailed 5 puppet companies and struck off the strength or decimated four others at Bie Dai, 55 km South of Saigon.

Enemy naval patrols were hit in the Mekong Delta and four vessels sent to the bottom on two rivers.

Motorized columns of the enemy were intercepted on the various roads near Ba Dong and Hoa Hoa, North of Saigon, and 13 vehicles were destroyed in the same sector.

On the Western High Plateau, an armoured squadron of the puppet 3rd Regiment fell into an ambush north of Pleiku and was forced to turn back after losing ten vehicles destroyed.

Puppet Nguyen Van Thieu's Frenzied Clamour

It is reported from Saigon that, on December 9, 11 and 12, 1969 puppet President Nguyen Van Thieu blasted his opponents as "communists" and "reactionaries" and threatened to behead them. He called them "cowards" and "traitors" who had upheld a policy of "compromise" and opted a political settlement.

His frenzied reaction was to cope with his political predicament created by the mounting opposition of his adversaries, chiefly of the townswomen, to his policy of saving Nixon's war proposition. AFP reported on Dec. 2 that the Students' General Association in Saigon had sent to American students a letter welcoming their anti-Viet Nam war actions and protesting against the U.S. "Vietnamization" policy in which Vietnamese were set against Vietnamese.

The Saigon students demanded that US troops be completely withdrawn so that sovereignty and freedom could be restored to South Viet Nam. The Gai Phong press-correspondent in Saigon reported that supported by other sections of the people in their action against the puppets, the students had set up a "Committee for the Defence of the Citizens Right to Live" and launched a campaign against gutter culture and for the rehabilitation of the national culture. In a teach-in on Dec. 3 attended also by many politicians, the Saigon academic circles came out against the puppet rulers' impoverishment of the people and gagging of the press.

The same correspondent said that at a Conference held at the end of November,

the Buddhist delegates had exposed the Saigon junta's terror against the Buddhists and suppression of the freedom of belief. At this gathering, Superior Prince Thich Thien Hoa, Chairman of the Buddhist Institute for Religious Affairs, affirmed that the policy of Buddhism was to save the country and restore peace. He flayed Thieu-Ky-Huong's misuse of the nation and people, hanging on war and lending foreign aid to pile up death and destruction and to impose neo-colonialism on the Vietnamese people. He also expressed the firm belief that however powerful the US might be, it would be defeated by the Vietnamese, the war would come to an end and the traitors to the country would be condemned by history.